

# — LARRY ROMANOFF — Democracy, The Most Dangerous Religion — Part 11 – Democracy to Fascism

1 day ago admin

## Democracy, The Most Dangerous Religion

### Part 11 – Democracy to Fascism

By Larry Romanoff, November 16, 2022

Fascism is a political ideology fundamentally authoritarian in character, with a strong nationalism and an essentially belligerent militaristic outlook. Fascism carries primarily a corporate perspective as opposed to a socialist view, directed to satisfying the needs, values and objectives of finance and corporations, organising both the economy and the political system according to this agenda. A fascist government actively suppresses any objection to its ideology and will crush any movement which opposes it. In keeping with their belligerent nature, fascist governments generally view violence and war as stimulants to national spirit and vitality. Being politically Right-Wing, they maintain their position through firm control or compliance of the media, and most often engage in a vast array of lies and deception. These governments tend to be bigoted, if not racist, invariably require “enemies” to achieve public solidarity, and are often supremacist or at least ‘exceptional’ in their self-assessment. They either believe, or pretend to believe, that they have a license on truth. Large military budgets, the creation and demonisation of fictitious enemies to propagate fear and maintain population control, are all typical characteristics of a fascist regime, as is massive public surveillance.

In 1995 the Italian Scholar Umberto Eco produced a paper titled ‘Eternal Fascism’ in which he examined the characteristics of fascist regimes. In 2003, Laurence W. Britt did an excellent and scholarly work in dissecting and categorising past fascist regimes, in which he revealed common threads that linked all of them in “patterns of national behavior and abuse of power“. He wrote that “Even a cursory study of these fascist and protofascist regimes reveals the absolutely striking convergence of their modus operandi, (which is) not a revelation ... but useful ... to shed needed light on current circumstances.” I am including here a composite of edited extracts from these two papers with additional commentary of my own. Significant statements by these two authors are in quotation marks. This is a list of the characteristics of fascist states, taken from Britt’s original article:

Early Warning Signs of Fascism

Powerful and continuing nationalism

Supremacy of the military

Obsession with national security

Obsession with crime and punishment

Identification of enemies/scapegoats as a unifying cause

Disdain for human rights

Corporate power is protected while labor power is suppressed

Controlled mass media

Rampant cronyism and corruption

Intertwined religion and government

Fraudulent elections

Disdain for intellectuals and the arts

Rampant Sexism

If we examine the US on these categories, we find an almost perfect match. Certainly, the US has the most strident nationalism of all nations today, with the hysteria of patriotism and flag-worship unabated and even increasing, with the delusional theory of American Exceptionalism as virulent as ever. There is no question about military supremacy, with the US spending almost twice as much on its military as the rest of the world combined and being by an order of magnitude the world's largest arms manufacturer and dealer. President Obama stated flatly that for the US to remain 'peaceful and prosperous' it needed the world's largest and most powerful military to maintain an overwhelming military supremacy. Obsession with issues of national security is so common in the US today it has become an object of ridicule. Every manner of information is withheld, every manner of lie is told, every manner of crime is committed, all with the excuse of 'national security'. Britt noted that a national security apparatus was usually an instrument of oppression, operating in secret and beyond any constraints, with its actions always justified under the rubric of protecting "national security", and that questioning these oppressive activities is now often portrayed as unpatriotic or even treasonous.

Britt noted that all the fascist regimes had an obsession with crime and punishment, stating that most "maintained Draconian systems of criminal justice with huge prison populations" – a perfect description of America today, including the 'unchecked power and rampant abuse' by the police. He also noted that in all these fascist states, 'normal' crime and political crime were almost interchangeable, "often merged into trumped-up criminal charges ... used against political opponents of the regime". These characteristics of crime, punishment and incarceration are all fields in which America leads the world by a wide margin today as we have already seen.

In terms of enemies being needed for solidarity and to maintain “a unifying cause”, the US is also the outstanding world leader, creating real and fictitious enemies not only for itself, but doing a rather good job in creating animosities throughout the world. In fact, a signature feature of the US is its worldwide propagation of the game called “Let’s you and him fight.”, as we see in Asia today, and with interference in the Ukraine, Russia, China, and dozens of other countries. Creating political chaos and large military risks is a common fascist trait, which is partly why military supremacy is necessary, black and white America attempting to partition the world into ideological factions, often in preparation for war. For some decades, the US milked the Cold War for all it was worth, casting the Soviet Union as a bitter enemy and creating animosity where none would have existed. With the fall of the USSR, the US turned immediately to other nations, never really forgetting Russia, and then created its 9-11 ‘Pearl Harbor Moment’ that would permit it to have a permanent enemy in the person of ‘terrorism’, a war that will never be won since the US creates all the terrorist events to prolong it. It has the added advantage of demonising all the world’s Muslims while equating all Arabs with terrorists. Enough enemies here for a lifetime of fascism.

A fundamental practice of a fascist or pre-fascist government is demonisation of ‘the others’, outsiders who are the enemy. For the people, these (usually imaginary) enemies provide not only an essential cornerstone of the fascist state but an essential adhesive for their fabricated national identity. Being thus united against a common other, fascism becomes deeply racist by definition and in practice. This demonisation of selected enemies is so intense that pacifism or a lack of belligerence equate to treason, to sympathising with the enemy. Or, in today’s US lexicon, “giving aid and comfort to the enemy“. In the world of fascism, disagreement is treason. George Bush and Dick Cheney: “If you aren’t with us, you’re against us“. US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles: “There are only two kinds of people in the world: Christians who believe in capitalism, and the other kind.” In his study of these regimes, Britt wrote that “the most significant common thread” among them was this demonisation of other peoples as enemies of the state, “to divert attention, to shift blame, and to channel frustration into controlled directions“. He claimed that their methods of choice – propaganda and misinformation – were usually effective. Britt noted that “Active opponents of these regimes were inevitably labeled as terrorists and dealt with accordingly“, which is precisely what happens today in the US, where increasingly it occurs that challengers of the system are labelled as terrorists, even to the extent of the ‘food terrorists‘.

No reasonable person can claim today that the US has any concern for human rights, certainly not any outside the continental US, and increasingly less within its borders. Except for Israel, the US has by far the worst record of human rights violations during the past several hundred years, far outstripping anything attributed to people like Stalin, Hitler or the Japanese. It is, after all, the US that built and still maintains the largest

network of torture prisons and ships in the history of the world, even though the US media have removed this topic from the publishing list.

In terms of media control, the US government covers this not by ownership or direct censorship but by a cabal of closely-interwoven interests working on the same precise agenda, almost totally eliminating any necessity for overt acts. Corruption and cronyism are as alive and virulent in American government today as they have ever been in any society at any time in recent history. The lobbies alone, working with the secret government, are more than sufficient evidence of this, with corruption increasing noticeably each year. Americans may quarrel with the point of an integration of religion and government but, while religion is theoretically separated from the state, it is joined at the hip in practice. We have George Bush telling us God told him to invade and destroy Iraq, Obama telling us Christ's redemption of him provides him with solace on a daily basis, and a long list of other nonsense indicating that evangelical hysteria is never far removed from the government, even if only to mislead an ignorant population. Britt noted that religion and the ruling elite were tied together in some way. "The fact that the ruling elite's behavior was incompatible with the precepts of the religion was generally swept under the rug. Propaganda kept up the illusion that the ruling elites were defenders of the faith and opponents of the 'godless'."

Fraudulent elections are more overtly creeping into the American electoral system every year. We had George Bush's brother removing more than 50,000 persons from the voter lists in Florida, all of whom were legitimate voters, and sufficient to provide an election victory. Even then, when votes were finally counted accurately, Bush was proven to have lost the election, but the consequences could not be reversed. As well, the new digital voting machines have been condemned even by those who designed them, as wide open to electoral fraud and manipulation to the extent of changing the outcome of every vote. Moreover, it is openly admitted that even without manipulation, an accurate count is not physically possible. But the government continues to roll out these systems, one would have to assume for their manipulation potential.

LOS ANGELES, CA – APRIL 17: Members of the National Socialist Movement (NSM) rally near City Hall on April 17, 2010 in Los Angeles, California. An NSM anti-illegal immigration rally in October in Riverside, California resulted in fights between the neo-Nazis and counter-protesters. (Photo by David McNew/Getty Images)

It is widely recognised the US has been dumbing-down education for decades, starving the educational systems of funds, using increasingly unqualified part-time and adjunct teachers and professors, increasing tuition costs to the point where education will soon be unaffordable. We don't need an education to see that the only possible result is an increasingly uneducated and ignorant population. In his study, Britt noted that "intellectual and academic freedom were considered subversive to national security and

the patriotic ideal. Universities were tightly controlled; politically unreliable faculty harassed or eliminated. Unorthodox ideas or expressions of dissent were strongly attacked, silenced, or crushed.” This forms a perfect description of the situation today in the US, certainly on the crushing of dissent. I have no observation to make on the arts, but the US appears to qualify solidly on every point in the above list, and I see no reason for Americans or indeed anyone else to take comfort in this. Is the US a fascist state? How do we avoid answering in the affirmative?

To people of a country like the US, who are deprived of a clear national identity, fascism creates one by stoking the fires of a false nationalism though propagandising the pathologically false conviction that “the world’s greatest privilege is to be born or to live in this country“, that every citizen “belongs to the best people in the world”, all of whom are, by definition, “good”. US President Calvin Coolidge: “To live under the American Constitution is the greatest political privilege that was ever accorded to the human race“. Michael Hirsh used the same jingoistic nonsense to justify American cannibalisation of the world by stating that American global domination was “the greatest gift the world has received in ... possibly all of recorded history.” Britt noted the powerful propagation and displays of nationalistic expression, “From the prominent displays of flags and ubiquitous lapel pins, the fervor to show patriotic nationalism, both on the part of the regime itself and of citizens caught up in its frenzy, was always obvious. Catchy slogans, pride in the military, and demands for unity were common themes in expressing this nationalism.”

To underscore the above, Global Research published an article in March of 2015 titled “The End of Canada in Ten Steps: A Conversation with Naomi Wolf”, in which it was noted that she studied “the way open societies were crushed from within by authoritarian elements“, such as those existing in all Right-Wing countries today, and claimed there was “a ‘blueprint’ followed by all dictatorial rulers composed of ten steps” as follows:

Invoke an external and internal threat

Establish secret prisons

Develop a paramilitary force

Surveil ordinary citizens

Infiltrate citizen groups

Arbitrarily detain and release citizens

Target key individuals

Restrict the press

Cast criticism as “espionage” and dissent as “treason”

## Subvert the rule of law

Global Research finally noted that “In her 2007 book *The End of America: Letter of Warning to a Young Patriot*, Naomi Wolf not only described this formula for fascism, she outlined how these repressive measures are in evidence in modern day America.”

There is one other item pertaining to fascism in America that contains elements of all characteristics we've discussed, one which Hollywood and the media have taken great pains to develop though the ground was already very fertile indeed, and this category is heroes and super-heroes. The US has always glorified war and war heroes, describing American cannon-fodder as “sons of freedom giving their lives for democracy“, when they were simply massacring impoverished civilians to enrich the bankers. Eco noted that “In every mythology the hero is an exceptional being, but in Fascist ideology heroism is the norm”, with the fascist hero impatient to die, but who, in his impatience, “more frequently sends other people to death“. This black and white religious proto-fascism which has perhaps always existed in America was the seedbed for the worship of heroes and winners. Americans, in their desperate jingoistic desire to be “good” and to “win“, and in a bid to prove their overwhelming moral superiority, turned from reality to fiction and gave us Superman, Batman, Spiderman and Captain America. All are Christian proto-fascists engaged in fictional battles of good against evil, with the Americans living vicariously through these imaginary beings, sharing in their awesome power and moral righteousness, and whose costumes inevitably bear labels saying “Made in America”. And indeed, we cannot watch an American movie without encountering this irritating white supremacist ideology. Think of movies like *Avatar* or *Independence Day*; their entire purpose is to fuel this ideological jingoism and make all viewers “proud to be American“. But it's all a fiction. The real American heroes are not Superman or Spiderman but Curtis LeMay, Henry Kissinger, Ronald Reagan and Madeline Albright, all criminally-insane psychopathic killers.

It is interesting that a fascist government, with its instinctive hatred of socialism, is in reality the most socialist of all forms of government, the only qualification being that fascist socialism nurtures and feeds corporations while normal socialism nurtures the general population. What we might call “corporate socialism“, which is what exists today in the US, is a fairly precise definition of fascism. Tax benefits that favor the rich either primarily or exclusively, a high-income inequality, the dismantling of any social safety net, different laws for the rich and powerful than for the poor, corporate immunity for crimes, a lack of corporate regulation and oversight, are all typical characteristics. Britt noted that “Since organized labor was seen as the one power center that could challenge the political hegemony of the ruling elite and its corporate allies, it was inevitably crushed or made powerless”. The US government and elites, except for one brief historical period, have always strived to destroy labor to protect the profits of big business. In Britt's study, “the poor formed an underclass, (and) being poor was

considered akin to a vice.” And in which nation today have color and poverty been criminalised? Of course. The world’s largest fascist state – America.

He also noted rampant cronyism and corruption between the political and corporate elites and stated that “With the national security apparatus under control and the media muzzled, this corruption was largely unconstrained and not well understood by the general population.” Corruption and cronyism are as alive and virulent in American government today as they have ever been in any society at any time in recent history. The lobbies alone, working with the secret government, are more than sufficient evidence of this, with corruption increasing noticeably each year. Similarly, no reasonable person can question any longer the suppression of labor and the protection and enhancement of corporate power in America. We have already covered in detail the trashing of the social contract, the destruction of labor protections and the evisceration of the middle class. No further evidence is necessary.

There is another alarming category that evidences even more strongly the threats to civil society from the authoritarian and fascist police-state mentality that is increasingly permeating all of the US, this involving trivial civil disputes that should in no case involve the police. In July of 2014, a Minneapolis man was ejected from a Southwest Airlines flight with his two children for questioning why he was qualified for priority boarding but his two children were not. He posted a Tweet that said, “Wow, rudest agent in Denver. Kimberly S, gate C39, not happy“. Southwest Airlines’ gate attendants saw the tweet, ejected Watson and his children from the flight, informing him he now qualified as a “safety threat“, and threatened to have him arrested unless he immediately deleted his post. In an article on US Education, I wrote of kindergarten teachers calling the police to arrest children who misbehaved, and of a Chinese woman tourist in New Hampshire who was tasered and assaulted by police when a clerk at an Apple store complained she wanted to buy two phones. In another case, a father in New Hampshire attended a parent-school meeting to protest the classroom use of sexually-explicit reading material provided to his teen-age daughter. When the man exceeded the arbitrary maximum of two minutes speaking time, the principal called the police and had the man arrested. In each case, no ‘law‘ was violated so the police used generic charges of “causing a public disturbance” or some other such nuisance charge.

These false charges may well be dismissed by a court but still present a serious violation of civil rights and a gross exaggeration of the ability of individuals to create their own laws and of the police to enforce them. In the Southwest Airlines case above, had the man refused to delete his negative post, the agent would certainly have called the police who, cast from the same authoritarian mold, would have automatically arrested and charged him, probably with ‘Twitter Terrorism‘. The man would likely have escaped in the end, but it would have been a long and expensive climb out from the bottom of that hole. In the case of the Apple store, the female customer was physically knocked to the

ground and tasered by police immediately on their arrival. In neither case did the police make even minimal attempts to ascertain the facts. In fact, the only salient “fact” was that of a civilian challenging any kind of authority, even the kind that is so weak as to be invisible. No civilian has any practical defense against an airline agent or shop clerk who testify that he “caused a public disturbance“, nor against police charges for having done so. The only immunity comes from wealth or political power.

There are countless similar cases which all have in common an implicit assumption that anyone, even in a position of minimal authority such as a KFC clerk, has the power to dictate imaginary rules that obtain the force of law with the police and which, if challenged, will result in arrest. Individual private citizens, as least those lacking obvious wealth or power, are increasingly relegated to the social trash bin. Incidents such as these may appear individually trivial and unconnected, but they are not trivial in bulk and are indications of a frightening authoritarianism infecting all of America, part of the widespread rush to fascism occurring in all politically Right-Wing nations, especially in the US. That this should be such a common experience is a frightening and almost terrifying development, where one now fears to enter any dispute with even the most minor employee or clerk, in almost any context, and regardless of the justification.

When common citizens are afraid to challenge the most trivial injustices in civil society, when the people as individuals have been moved to the bottom of the priority list, when even store clerks have effective arrest authority, this is authoritarian fascism – a classic definition of a de facto fascist police state. In my E-book on the Police State and the discussion of arbitrary and unaccountable law enforcement, we saw other similar examples where this, the most fundamental of civil rights – the right to voice complaint – has been converted to a criminal act. Those instances involved mostly the police badly exceeding their authority, but this category involves mere civilians with no actual invested civil authority of any kind, and yet in each case legal authority being presumed and exercised entirely at the whim of these same persons. While Americans please themselves by accusing China of being authoritarian, it is in fact the US that is both authoritarian and fascist. China is today a very human civil society compared to Transformed America.